

GUIDE TO GRADUATE STUDY
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

The rules and requirements contained here were adopted by the Philosophy Department in academic year 2018–19, and apply to students who begin the program Fall 2018 or later.

This document provides most of the basic information students will need about the Philosophy Department doctoral program. Further information is contained in the Graduate School Bulletin of Information (available at the Graduate School Website, <http://graduateschool.nd.edu/>).

Structure of the Program

The Department of Philosophy admits students into a PhD. program, awarding the degrees of PhD. in Philosophy and MA in Philosophy. The Department does not have a separate MA program to which students can apply.

All regular faculty in the Department contribute to the PhD. program by leading seminars and reading groups, evaluating qualifying papers, serving on oral exam and dissertation committees, and supervising dissertation projects. Faculty with joint appointments count as members of the Philosophy Department for the purpose of staffing examination boards for oral exams, dissertation proposal committees and dissertation advising boards, and serving as dissertation directors. Faculty with concurrent appointments count as members of other departments unless they are deemed to have philosophical expertise not satisfied by other members of the Philosophy faculty, but they cannot ever serve as sole director of a student's dissertation.

The program is managed by a Committee for Graduate Studies (CGS). The committee is made up of faculty from the Philosophy Department appointed by the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS). The CGS oversees the degree requirements and monitors the progress of students in the program. Decisions about dismissing students from the program are made by the Philosophy faculty as a whole.

Requirements for a PhD.

1. **Course-credit and research-credit requirements**

A full-time student is one who (1) registers for nine or more credit hours of course work per semester in the academic year or (2) has completed 42 credit hours and is registered for a minimum of one credit hour. A student need not be in residence to be full-time.

All students must complete at least 42 credit hours of graduate course work (Fourteen 3 hour seminars). Credit hours from dissertation research do not count toward the 42 hours required for the degree. Students entering the doctoral program with previous advanced study may be excused from up to 12 hours of course work. Decisions about this are made after the student's first year. With Departmental approval, up to six hours of the graduate course work may be in undergraduate philosophy courses numbered 43000 - 43999 and another six hours may be in graduate courses in related areas outside philosophy. Credit will not be given for undergraduate courses in which the student receives a grade below B. Almost all of the 42 hours of course work is ordinarily completed in the first two years of the program, and any remaining hours must be completed during the third year.

Feedback: While the timing and the precise nature of the feedback provided to students on their seminar work will naturally vary from professor to professor, that feedback will include a final written assessment of the student's term paper. This feedback, or a brief summary thereof, will be provided to the DGS for inclusion in the student's file.

2. General Course Requirements

Each student must satisfy the following:

- Proseminar (PHIL 83104) to be taken in the first semester
- Logic requirement (PHIL 83901 or more advanced course or exam)
- Distribution requirement: Four seminars in different fields, including at least two from Area I and one from Area II.

Area I: Philosophy of Mind, Metaphysics, Epistemology, Philosophy of Language, Philosophy of Science, Philosophy of Logic, Philosophy of Mathematics

Area II: Ethics, Political Philosophy, Aesthetics

- History requirement: Three seminars in the history of western philosophy, one each from the historical periods Ancient, Medieval, Modern.

Students must also take two teaching courses (which do not count toward the 14 required seminars):

- TA Orientation (PHIL 85104), before or during the term in which a student first serves as a teaching assistant (typically taken in semester 3).
- Teaching Practicum (PHIL 85105) before the student first teaches on their own responsibility (typically taken in semester 5).

3. Advising

Report to the DGS the name of your advisor at the beginning of your 5th semester; when you have an advisor who has agreed to direct your dissertation, no later than the end of your 6th semester, report this to the DGS.

Students are encouraged to develop a working relationship with an academic advisor as early as possible. It is not uncommon to change advisors one or more times during one's studies, especially when one begins preparing for the oral exam or the dissertation project. An advisor, even one that the student does not expect to supervise their dissertation project, is an excellent resource for guided mentoring and scholarly development beyond what comes with participation in seminars.

At the beginning of the 5th semester, the student will report to the DGS the name of the advisor who will supervise reading in preparation for the oral exam.

All students who have passed their oral exams (as well as students who are scheduled to take their exams in the current semester) are eligible to participate in the Department's Dissertation Seminar, offered each semester. Students in their 7th and 8th semesters who are in residence are required to participate in the seminar.

At the end of the 6th semester, the student will report to the DGS the name of the advisor who has agreed to direct the student's doctoral dissertation.

Beginning in the student's 7th semester, before the beginning of the academic term, each student must submit to their dissertation director(s) and DGS a report on the status of their dissertation project. This report should include either a description of the progress made on the dissertation or a description of the project that the student plans to propose. The student is expected to submit new work each semester and to report to each member of the student's dissertation committee each semester. Students who fail to submit substantial new work in a semester will have their file reviewed by the CGS to determine if the student should be recommended to the Department for dismissal.

4. **Qualifying Papers**

Monday after mid-semester break of 4th semester, submit both qualifying papers together with any accompanying notes to the DGS.

By the mid-point of the student's fourth semester, the student will submit two qualifying papers to be evaluated by a committee of faculty members appointed by the DGS. Each paper may be submitted together with a note from a faculty member who advised the student during the research and writing of the paper, this note commenting on the paper's strengths and weaknesses.

Students in the philosophy track of the History and Philosophy of Science PhD. program and Philosophy students who are pursuing the Joint Program in Logic and Foundations of Mathematics submit their papers on Monday after mid-semester break of their *fifth* semester.

A qualifying paper is required to make a contribution to its subject matter and to engage with important literature relevant to that subject matter. It should be clearly written and free of mistakes in reasoning. It should demonstrate that its author is approaching the standard of professional-quality writing in philosophy.

The committee will determine if the two submitted papers, as a collective, pass or fail the requirement and will report its evaluation with clear indications of each paper's strengths and weaknesses. In the event that the papers fail, the committee will advise the CGS whether to allow the student to resubmit qualifying papers by the end of the student's second summer. The CGS will determine, before the end of the student's 4th semester, whether to provide this allowance based on the report from the committee that graded the qualifying papers and a consideration of the student's overall record. In the event that the allowance is not made, or in the event that the student fails the requirement upon resubmission, the student will be dismissed from the PhD. program.

5. Oral Exam

Orals reading list to be approved by all members of the examining board by the end of the first week of classes after mid-semester break of 5th semester; oral exam to be held before the end of the first week of classes after mid-semester break of 6th semester.

At the beginning of the 5th semester the student and advisor, in consultation with the DGS, appoints an oral examination board consisting of the advisor and three other faculty members. A student may, in exceptional circumstances, request to have a board with one member from outside the Philosophy Department. This board will devise a reading list for the student's oral exam, oversee the student's preparation for this exam, and conduct the examination. The board and advisor must approve the reading list by the end of the first week of classes after the mid-semester break of the 5th semester.

The reading list for the oral exam should be designed to provide general coverage of the chosen area, typically the area of intended dissertation research, and need not reflect the choice of a dissertation topic. The Department allows for a wide range of research areas, but a student planning to select an area that is not covered by the general course requirements must receive permission from the CGS. The oral exam will test the student's mastery of the literature on the reading list and the student's capacity to engage, and to defend views regarding, the topics treated in that literature.

The exam must be taken before the end of the first week of classes after the mid-semester break of the 6th semester. It should be scheduled with the Philosophy Department at least four weeks in advance and last ninety minutes. Three votes out of four are required to pass the exam. Should the student fail, the examining board will advise the CGS whether to allow the student to retake the exam by the end of the student's 6th semester. The CGS will determine, within ten days of receiving this advice, whether to provide this allowance based on the report from the examining board and a consideration of the student's overall record. In the event that the allowance is not made, or in the event that the student fails the exam a second time, the student will be dismissed from the PhD. program.

6. Dissertation Proposal

Report the name of the advisor of the dissertation project by the end of 6th semester; distribute proposal to the committee by the end of the first week of classes after mid-semester break of 7th semester; proposal must be approved by end of 7th semester.

By the end of the student's 6th semester, each student chooses one or two members of the Philosophy faculty as the director (or co-director) of the dissertation.

In consultation with the director(s), the student prepares a written proposal for research in a particular area. The dissertation proposal consists of a description of the topic and central questions to be treated in the dissertation and an account of the general approach to be taken to address those questions. The length of the proposal is specified by the director(s).

The student submits the proposal to the DGS before the end of the first week of classes after the mid-semester break of the 7th semester. The DGS distributes copies to a Dissertation Proposal Committee. This committee consists of the director and three additional members of the faculty appointed (in consultation with the DGS) by the director. No more than one member of this committee may come from outside the Philosophy Department, and all such outside members must be approved in advance by the CGS.

Each member of the committee has at least two weeks to read the proposal and decide whether or not to approve it. If a member of the Proposal Committee does not approve the proposal, the student will either revise the proposal to satisfy the member's objections or, with the permission of the DGS, replace one but no more than one member who has rejected the proposal with another member of the faculty. A student may proceed with a dissertation only after all four members of the Proposal Committee have approved the proposal.

Following the approval of the proposal, the Proposal Committee meets with the student and the dissertation director(s) to ask questions and give advice about the student's writing of the dissertation. This meeting is not an examination that can be failed but rather an opportunity for the student to obtain expert guidance regarding the dissertation topic.

The dissertation proposal must be approved by the end of the 7th semester of enrollment.

7. Foreign Language Requirement

To be determined for each student by the advisor and DGS immediately after the proposal meeting.

After the student's proposal meeting, the director(s) and DGS may agree that the student has the linguistic competence to complete the dissertation and proceed with future academic work. Alternatively, they may agree that the student must demonstrate further competence in languages necessary either to complete the dissertation or to be a responsible professional researcher. The dissertation director(s) and DGS will determine in each case the particular languages and level of expertise required, and the student will not be permitted to defend the dissertation until demonstrating that level of expertise. When the student has completed this requirement, the director(s) will communicate this to the DGS.

8. Dissertation

When the dissertation is completed and approved by the director(s), the student submits an electronic copy to the DGS, who distributes copies to three readers. Readers are approved by the DGS on recommendation of the student and dissertation director(s). (If the student has co-directors, neither co-director may serve as one of the three readers.) No more than

one reader may be from outside the Philosophy Department. Readers from other departments at Notre Dame and readers from outside Notre Dame must be pre-approved by the CGS.

Readers must be given at least four weeks in which to read a dissertation and approve it for defense. Students are responsible for seeing that they are able to meet all deadlines for final acceptance of the dissertation by the Graduate School while allowing readers sufficient time to read the dissertation. A list of relevant deadlines is available each semester in the Philosophy Department Office.

A dissertation rejected by two or more of the readers may be resubmitted after revisions to the same board of readers. If only one reader rejects the dissertation, the student may either resubmit a revised version to the same board or else ask that a fourth reader evaluate the dissertation. This reader must be approved by the DGS and all three of the original readers of the dissertation. If the fourth reader rejects the dissertation, the student may resubmit it in revised form to a board consisting of any three of the previous readers.

After three readers have approved the dissertation, the Philosophy Department and the Graduate School will arrange for a Dissertation Defense. This is a meeting, open to the public, in which the student responds to questions and comments from the dissertation director, the readers, and, if the student agrees, anyone else present. On the recommendation of a majority of the readers, the defense may take the form of a thirty minute public lecture, followed by questions and discussion. The director and readers may require revisions of the dissertation as a result of weaknesses revealed in the oral defense. At the end of the defense, the director and readers decide whether the student has passed or failed the defense.

Three votes out of four are required to pass the defense (in the case of a co-directed directed, four out of five are required). This is not an evaluation of the dissertation (which has already been approved) but of the quality of the student's oral defense of it. In the case of a failure, the student is required to undertake a second defense. Should a student fail the defense twice, the Philosophy faculty will decide whether the student shall be declared ineligible for the doctorate.

After successfully defending the dissertation and making any necessary changes, the candidate will present two clean copies, signed by the dissertation director, to the Graduate School for final approval and submission. The dissertation must be formatted in accordance with the ProQuest/UMI guidelines and with the graduate school's formatting guide. These are available on the graduate school's web page under "resources for current students."

Questions concerning formatting and submitting of dissertations should be directed to Shari Hill of the graduate school at:

sharihill@nd.edu

The candidate pays the binding costs for the two official copies required by the Graduate School, for any personal copies desired, and for the required microfilming costs.

9. Degree Eligibility

The student must fulfill all doctoral requirements, including the dissertation and its defense, within eight years from the time of matriculation. Failure to complete any of the Graduate School or departmental requirements within the prescribed period results in forfeiture of degree eligibility. Extensions of this 8-year deadline are sometimes granted by the Graduate School when petitioned by the DGS.

10. Teaching

Students often serve as teaching assistants for the Department. The ordinary schedule involves serving as a TA each semester of year 2 and one semester of year 3. Assisting may include meeting students during office hours, grading and leading discussion sections. Some students may be awarded a fellowship from the Department to complete their dissertation in their 6th year, in which case they will ordinarily serve as a TA each semester of their 6th year.

After a dissertation proposal is approved, and after completion of PHIL 85105 Teaching Practicum, students are eligible to teach courses on their own responsibility and are expected to do so at least once.

The department takes teaching very seriously. Satisfactory teaching counts as part of maintaining good academic standing in the program. The performance of teaching assistants is evaluated in part by having their students fill out the department's TA evaluation form at the end of each semester. In addition, faculty who have students assisting them are asked to provide a written evaluation of their teaching assistants' performance. Graduate students teaching courses on their own responsibility are evaluated by their students who fill out the university's "Course Instructor Feedback" (CIF), on-line. Graduate student instructors should encourage their students to fill out the CIF.

Specialized Tracks and Programs

The PhD. program works together with other academic units at Notre Dame to provide a few specialized tracks, certificates, concurrent degrees, or joint degrees. These include a coursework based MA in History and Philosophy of Science, an interdisciplinary MS in Interdisciplinary Mathematics, a Joint PhD. in Logic and Foundations of Mathematics, the emphasis in Modern and Contemporary European Philosophy, and the emphasis in Medieval Philosophy, and the Certificate in Classics.

Students who wish to pursue a specialized track or program should contact the DGS, who can direct them to the personnel who maintain the guidelines for that track or program.

Grades

(For further information concerning graduate school policies on grades, including quality points, computation of GPA, S & U grades, examinations etc., see Graduate School Bulletin.)

Students are expected to have at least some areas in which they do A or A- work. Grades of B+ and B are adequate grades in individual courses, but a grade below B raises questions about a student's ability to do satisfactory work in the graduate program. Grades of C or below are extremely uncommon and express very strong reservations about the student's abilities (C is the lowest passing grade for a graduate course. Grades of C- or D are considered the equivalent of an F).

Incompletes: A grade of I (incomplete) may be given by an instructor when a student has not completed all requirements for a graduate course by the end of the semester in which the course was given. (Incompletes are not allowed in undergraduate courses.) A student is allowed no more than one incomplete per semester, and an incomplete may be assigned by an instructor only after the student has obtained written permission from the DGS. Students who have received an incomplete in a course must complete all work for the course within 30 days from when the Incomplete was assigned. The university temporarily computes an I as the equivalent of an F in calculating the G.P.A. When the student fulfills the above requirements, the I is replaced by the new grade. If work for the course is not completed by the time stipulated above, the grade of I is permanently changed to an F. Students should keep in mind that to remain eligible for financial aid, they must maintain a 3.0 GPA. If an I causes the GPA to fall below 3.0, financial aid will be terminated by the graduate school (this rule does not apply to the end of the student's first term).

Academic Integrity

Consult the Graduate School Bulletin for the Graduate School's policy and procedures regarding academic integrity.

Financial Support

(For further information on Graduate School policies regarding financial support, see the Graduate School Bulletin.)

Maintaining good standing in the program is a necessary condition for being eligible for stipend and tuition support. Maintaining good standing includes, but is not exhausted by, (1) meeting the graduate school requirements that a student (a) be a full-time, degree seeking student; (b) maintain a GPA of at least 3.0; (c) have a dissertation proposal approved within four years of enrollment; (d) complete the degree in eight years or less of enrollment; and (2) meeting all department requirements in a timely fashion as specified in this document.

All regular full-time students in good academic standing and in residence receive full tuition scholarships and, during their first five years of study, stipend support from the College of Arts and Letters to help cover living expenses over the full 12 month calendar. Students deemed by their directors to be making timely progress towards completing their dissertations may apply for additional stipend support during the academic term of their sixth year. Students beyond the sixth year are not eligible to receive stipend support. All awards, except tuition scholarships, are taxable. After eight years, graduate students are no longer eligible to receive tuition scholarships.

Governance

Each graduate student class (from years 1 through 5) elects a representative. Class representatives are invited to attend most department faculty meetings as nonvoting participants. In addition, the class representatives elect from their number a member of the Committee on Graduate Studies. Graduate student interests on the University level are represented by the Graduate Student Union, which is operated through a council of elected graduate students. There is also an Advanced Student Affairs Committee, which includes representatives of the University administration and faculty and elected graduate student representatives.

Grievance Procedures

Students who believe they have been unjustly treated in an academic matter should make a written appeal to the CGS. If the matter involves a member of the CGS, appeal should be made instead to the Chair of the Philosophy Department. If a mutually satisfactory resolution cannot be reached at the department level, the Further Appeals complaint may be brought to the Graduate School according to its policy as outlined in “Graduate Student Appeal Procedure,” available at the Graduate School website.